



Hawaii

Launching the Healthy Hawaii Initiative: A Statewide Program to Promote Physical Activity and Nutrition

Public Health Problem

According to 2001 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data, 48% of adults in Hawaii do not engage in sufficient amounts of physical activity. Although more adults are active in Hawaii than in other parts of the United States, ethnic disparities are problematic; 58% of residents of Japanese and Filipino ancestry do not engage in sufficient levels of physical activity.

Evidence That Prevention Works

In 2001, the Task Force on Community Preventive Services identified six interventions that are effective in increasing physical activity levels in a community: (1) large-scale, high-intensity, community-wide campaigns with sustained visibility; (2) point-of-decision prompts encouraging people to use the stairs; (3) individually adapted health behavior change programs; (4) school-based physical education; (5) social support interventions in community settings; and (6) enhanced access to places for physical activity combined with informational outreach activities.

Program Example

In 1999, Hawaii decided to use a large portion of tobacco settlement funds on the Healthy Hawaii Initiative (HHI). HHI targets physical inactivity, tobacco use, and poor nutrition. Prominent features of HHI include school health programs, community grants, education for health professionals, and a communication campaign, “Start Living Healthy.” CDC provided technical assistance to the Hawaii Department of Health in evaluation and participated in a conference that led to the publication of *Recommendations for Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Physical Activity in Hawai’i*. From 2000 to 2002, the initiative funded over 40 schools and communities to implement programs and environmental and policy changes. Funded interventions include a walk to school program, a joint land use agreement between the Department of Parks and Recreation and schools, and a program to implement SPARK (Sports Play & Active Recreation for Kids) into schools’ curricula. With a 15-year time frame (1999–2014), HHI seeks to bring about environmental, policy, and programmatic changes to make long-term improvements in physical activity rates.

Implications

With adequate resources, commitment, and technical assistance, states can develop, launch, and evaluate statewide initiatives to promote physical activity. This program demonstrates the importance of collaboration between state health departments, universities, and CDC in establishing and developing a successful statewide initiative.